AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 5 as follows:

The present invention relates to a seedling pot for raising root crop seedlings such that a main material and a supplementary material added thereto do constitute the seedling pot. The main material is chosen herein from nonwoody fibers, with the supplementary material facilitating the desired healthy growth of any particular seedlings, also resolving the ~~pro-blems~~ problems of environmental pollution.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 12 as follows:

As known widely, the prior art seedling pots have usually been flower-pot miniatures molded using a proper plastics sheet such as a polyvinyl chloride resin. Those plastics pots are cheap but cost much labor because the seedlings should be removed from the pots, prior to transplantation to a farm or larger pots. A clod of soil around the root of each seedling is likely to be broken to injure the root, thereby adversely affecting growth of the seedling thus transplanted. The burning of those discarded seedling pots has undesirably caused environmental pollution. In some proposals that have been made in view of these problems and are going to be ~~em-ployed~~ employed in the art, certain agricultural and/or forestry wastes are salvaged to manufacture seedling paper-made pots.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 8 as follows:

In the preferred embodiments, the first ingredient of the mixture of raw plant materials as mentioned above may be composed of about 7 to 10 % by weight of an antibacterial bamboo fiber originating from bamboo stems, branches, skins and/or cores. Blended with this antibacterial bamboo fiber may be about 50 to 60 % by

weight of the boiled fiber prepared from a ditch reed (viz., *Phragmites communis*) or Japanese bush clover, about 20 to 30 % by weight of the carbonized material prepared by roasting a buck-wheat chaff, tea dregs, oil cakes, or using already-roasted coffee grounds (needing not be roasted again), and about 15 % by weight of urea. This mixture will be heated and compressed in a mold at a temperature of 180 °C or higher, preferably about 200 °C, at a pressure of 3 – 6 kg/cm^2 and for a time of 24 – 30 sec. Such a molding process does not need any binder such as a sizing agent that is generally used in the paper-making mills, because hydrogen bonds acting between the fibers will firmly adjoin them together to give a desired shape to the pot thus molded. Instead of direct thermal compression in the mold of a desired cavity shape, the bamboo fiber, the boiled fiber and carbonized plant material may alternatively be suspended first in water to form a slurry. This slurry will then be filtered through a paper-making screen, before thermally pressed in a mold. The antibacterial bamboo fiber contained in the peripheral wall of the seedling pot will retard and inhibit any lateral roots of the seedling from growing towards said wall. As a result, the taproot of this seedling will ~~preferen-tially~~ preferentially receive and utilize the nutritive compounds that are present around it, thereby producing an excellent root crop seedling.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 5 as follows:

By virtue of spontaneous and biological decomposition of the pots in the earth, they need no longer be removed when the seedlings are ~~trans-planted~~ transplanted. Labor consumption for transplantation will thus be saved as ~~com-pared~~ compared with the case of using the conventional plastics pots. The ~~carbon-ized~~ carbonized material contained in the pot wall will provide a noticeable amount of

carbon to react with urea so that nitrogen and/or its compounds are ~~pro-duced~~ produced to serve as one of the nutritive substances.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 12 as follows:

About 2 – 5% by weight of silicon dioxide (SiO_2) may be added to the described composition of seedling pots. A powder of quartz may be used as the main component of said silicon dioxide expected to enable repeated cultivation of the same crop on the same ground. It has been reported that *Fusarium* bacteria would cause putrefaction of watery soil fractions, ~~result-ing~~ resulting in inhibition of said repeated cultivation. However, the added silicon dioxide powder will induce wave propagation through the water in soil fractions, thereby protecting them from putrefaction.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 20 as follows:

Similarly to the conventional flowerpots, the seedling pot as molded above may have through its bottom a central drainage hole (1). Outward protrusions (3) and outward grooves (4) do all surround the central hole in order to prevent it from becoming clogged. The seedling pot will be ~~bio-logically~~ biologically decomposed in about two months, if left in the ground. This period will generally correspond to a time lapse from transplantation to the point of time when the pot's periphery start to interfere with the lateral roots growing sideways. Length of such a time lapse does naturally depend on the sorts of crops, and perforations (2) formed in and through the periphery and/or bottom of seedling pot will be useful to expedite biological ~~decom-position~~ decomposition thereof. The number of such perforations may typically be one or more, and 12 (twelve) or more or less. About 2 % by weight of a

water repellent may be added to the composition of said pot so as to retard biological decomposition by a few or several months. Such a prolonged life of pot in the ground will be convenient to cultivation of bulbous crops or to any grafted plants.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 9 as follows:

The seedling pot provided herein for raising root crops will ~~auto-nomically~~ autonomically vary its moisture content within a wide range of 7 to 25 %. If ambient humidity rises, then the pot will absorb moisture, tending to lower its humidity. If contrarily ambient humidity descends, then the pot will desorb moisture, tending to increase its humidity. By virtue of such an autonomical control of humidity, this pot will adjust itself to a temporary ambient dryness during usage for raising seedlings. Further, the seedling pot of the invention is superior to the polyvinyl chloride pots in its property of keeping warmth (18 °C – 10 °C), making itself suited for use in cold zones.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 19 as follows:

The raw materials used herein to produce the seedling pot of the ~~in-vention~~ invention have been useless wastes, so that such cheaper materials will lower manufacture cost. Even if the pots have to be thrown away after use, they can be burnt at such lower temperatures that any trash burner or the like will neither be injured, nor generating any amount of dioxines. In a case wherein the used pots are left in the grounds, they will be biologically ~~de-composed~~ decomposed by bacteria and/or enzymes to thereby give certain nutritive compounds, thus contributing to soil improvement and environment ~~puri-fication~~ purification.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 2 as follows:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a seedling pot provided in a first ~~em-bodiment~~ embodiment of the invention, the pot being designed for use to raise root crop seedlings;

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 13 as follows:

Fig. 7 is a perspective view of a seedling pot provided in a third ~~em-bodiment~~ embodiment of the invention, the pot being likewise designed for use to raise root crop seedlings; and

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 19 as follows:

Now, the first embodiment of the present invention will be described referring to Figs. 1 to 4. A material mixture for molding and constituting the pot is composed of about 10 % by weight of unboiled bamboo fiber, about 60 % by weight of boiled fibers of ditch reed and Japanese bush clover, and about 30 % by weight of roasted and carbonized buckwheat chaff, tea dregs and the like. The mixture further containing about 15 % by weight of urea, well blended therewith, is molded at 200 °C, at a pressure of 3 kg/cm^2 for 24 sec. Hydrogen bonds cause these fibers to firmly stick one to another to give a molded piece of the shape as a seedling pot. The seedling pot of the first embodiment resembles a flowerpot, and has in its bottom a central drainage hole 1, outward protrusions 3 and grooves 4 in communication with the hole. The protrusions 3 and grooves 4 alternating therewith are arranged in horizontal directions, radially and outwardly from the central hole 1. This pot has 8 (eight) perforations 2 in its periphery, and one in each of three radial outward grooves 4, thus the total number of those perforations is 11 (eleven). In

manufacture, a primary molding step will produce a circular flash continuing from a rim around the open top of this pot. Therefore, a secondary molding step will be conducted to remove such a flash and form at the same time the central hole and the perforations. Figs. 1 to 3 show the appearance of this ~~seed-ling~~ seedling pot, with Fig. 4 illustrating it in use and a seedling planted and growing therein.